

REMARKS

Reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, and entry of this paper, is respectfully requested. The applicant has reviewed the Final Office Action of June 22, 2005, and respectfully asserts that this paper is responsive to all points raised therein.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-35 are presently pending. Claims 1, 6, 8, 10, 16, 19, 24, 28-32, and 34 have been amended.

Claims 1, 10, 19, and 28 have been amended as discussed below. Claims 6, 16, 24, 29-32 have been amended for formalities only, to be consistent with the claims on which they depend. Claims 8 and 34 have been amended to recite further structure.

II. Rejections Under 35 USC 102(b)

Claims 1-7, 19-25 and 28-33 were rejected were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Keeler (U.S. Patent No. 2,620,213) (Keeler '213).

Independent claims 1 and 19 have been further amended to be directed to the spring member operatively coupled to the bolt and that the housing that extends around substantially all of the bolt, and as such confines at least lateral and vertical movement of the bolt, along the outer side of the bolt.

This is in complete contrast to Keeler '213, that does not show any structure extending around the bolt 15. Moreover, the bolt 15 rides on ribs 19, the ribs 19 confining movement of the bolt 15 from the inner side.

For the reasons above, Keeler '213 does not show the claimed invention. Accordingly, Keeler does not anticipate claims 1 and 19 under 35 USC 102(b).

Since claims 1 and 19 are not anticipated by Keeler '213 under 35 USC 102(b), claims 2-7, and 20-25, dependent thereon, are not anticipated by Keeler '213 under 35 USC 102(b) for the same reasons. These claims further distinguish the invention over Keeler '213.

Claim 28, as currently amended, recites a spring member operatively coupled to a bolt, and, a housing having an internal cavity, that includes detents for confining movement of the bolt, as well as grooves for engaging edges of lateral portions of the bolt.

Keeler '213, as discussed above, shows a bolt 15, that rides on ribs 19, the ribs 19 confining movement of the bolt 15 from the inner side. Keeler '213 fails to show any structure with an internal cavity for housing the bolt, with grooves in the internal cavity for receiving the bolt.

For the reasons above, Keeler '213 does not show the claimed invention. Accordingly, Keeler does not anticipate claim 28 under 35 USC 102(b).

Since claim 28 is not anticipated by Keeler '213 under 35 USC 102(b), claims 29-33, dependent thereon, are not anticipated by Keeler '213 under 35 USC 102(b) for the same reasons. These claims further distinguish the invention over Keeler '213.

III. Rejections Under 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 8-18, 26, 27, 34 and 35, were rejected were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Keeler '213 in view of Flowerday (U.S. Patent No. 5,472,248) (Flowerday '248).

Claim 1, from which claims 8 and 9 depend, has been discussed above. That discussion is applicable here.

Claim 19, from which claims 26 and 27 depend, has been discussed above. That discussion is applicable here.

Claim 10 is similar to claim 1, but adds the limitation of the housing at least partially enveloping the bolt.

Keeler '213 has been discussed above. That discussion is applicable here.

Flowerday '248 has been cited to teach a bolt housing (keeper) 12, that envelopes a bolt 14. It is respectfully asserted that the inner surface of the bolt 14 is configured for fitting over a correspondingly shaped track (guide 16). Flowerday '248 fails to teach any spring members operatively coupled to the bolt, and accordingly, provides its spring force differently than in Keeler '213, or the claimed invention. Moreover, at best, the keeper 12 of Flowerday '248, as shown in Fig. 2 of Flowerday '248, teaches only confinement of vertical movement of the bolt 15, and not lateral movement, as confinement of lateral movement of the bolt 15 is provided exclusively by the guides 16.

It is respectfully asserted that Keeler '213, fails to teach or suggest any modification with Flowerday '248, due to the different ways in which Keeler '213 and Flowerday '248 receive their spring force. As the ribs 19 provide the necessary confinement of movement for the bolt of Keeler '213, any modifications to Keeler '213 with the keeper 12 of Flowerday '248 are hindsight, and impermissible to render a claim obvious under 35 USC 103(a).

Even if the modification of Keeler '213 with Flowerday '248 were permissible, the proposed combination would still fall short of the claimed invention. This is because the keeper 12 from Flowerday '248 would at best, only serve to confine vertical movement of the bolt, as lateral movement of the bolt would remain confined by the ribs 19 of Keeler '213 and guides 16 of Flowerday '248.

Based on the reasons above, Keeler '213 can not properly be combined with Flowerday '248 in any way, to arrive at the claimed invention. Accordingly, claims 1, 10 and 19 are non-obvious under 35 USC 103(a) in view of the cited art.

Since claims 1, 10 and 19 are non-obvious under 35 USC 103(a) in view of Keeler '213 and Flowerday '248, claims 8 and 9, 11-18, and, 26 and 27, respectively dependent thereon, are also allowable over the art of record for the same reasons. These claims further distinguish the invention over the art of record.

Claim 28, from which claims 34 and 35 depend, has been discussed above. That discussion is applicable here.

Keeler '213 and Flowerday '248, and their proposed combination, have been discussed above. Those discussions are applicable here.

It is additionally asserted that neither Keeler '213, nor Flowerday '248, teach an internal cavity in a housing, that includes grooves in the cavity, that receive edges of the bolt. As discussed above, Keeler '213 lacks any such structure, and the same holds true for the keepers 12 of Flowerday '248.

Accordingly, any combination of Keeler '213 and Flowerday '248 would completely lack such structure, and remain structurally deficient. For these reasons, the proposed combination of Keeler '213 and Flowerday '248 is non-obvious under 35 USC 103(a) in view of the cited art.

Since claim 28 is non-obvious under 35 USC 103(a) in view of Keeler '213 and Flowerday '248, claims 34 and 35, dependent thereon, are also allowable over the art of record for the same reasons. These claims further distinguish the invention over the art of record.

PATENT

Atty Docket No. 066740

Express Mail Label No. EV471184498US

IV. Conclusion

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments as to the form, content, or entry of this paper, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below. Similarly, if there are any further issues yet to be resolved to advance the prosecution of this application to issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned counsel.

Entry of this paper and allowance of all pending claims, 1-35, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: September 22, 2005

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